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PEDAGOGICAL LITERATURE IN ENGLAND

MARIA E. FINDLAY

Leigh-on-Sea, England

English people are often reproached for indifference towards education, and the reproach is largely merited by the masters of the people. But it is not today merited by certain influential sections. The commercial world for twenty years or more has been vigorously pushing forward technical education; recently physicians, aroused by the physical deterioration of our city populations, have petitioned the Board of Education to take steps to counteract this evil through the schools; and, above all, politicians, Liberal and Conservative, have become sensible of the fact that in order to maintain its prestige as a nation England must reform its educational system from the infant school up to the university.

Agitation in these sections of the community has already brought forth a considerable quantity of books, very few of which, however, have permanent value. Ferment is also spreading inside the schools, the germs of which have not infrequently been carried to us from foreign lands. American books are read by English teachers, and would be more widely read if they cost less. In order that Dr. John Dewey's ideas might become better known, Professor Findlay of Manchester University lately edited (with permission) a small collection of his educational essays, which is published at 25 cents.¹ Herbartianism has now found a few ardent disciples and critics; and a controversy about Herbart's theory of education is arousing reflection on the subject of educational principles generally among teachers in secondary schools.

Under these four headings, viz., state and school organization of education, hygiene and physical training, reformed

¹ *The School and the Child*, Being Selections from the Educational Essays of John Dewey; Blackie & Son.

methods, and theory of education, we may group elastically nearly all the books issued during the last five years or so. There is no work of first rank; very few, we think, of second or third rank; but taken as a whole they show a good deal of hacking and hewing of old growths and planting for new.

First in order of importance for a student of English educational systems are the Blue Books issued by the Board of Education at Whitehall:² Reports, drawn up by various inspectors and specially engaged experts, of work in elementary schools, secondary schools, training colleges, and universities; also Codes and Regulations for all educational institutions wholly or partially supported by the state. Usually these volumes and pamphlets are dry reading to outsiders; but now and again, M. L. Morant, the permanent Secretary to the Board of Education, inserts an illuminating little preface; his *Suggestions to Teachers in Elementary Schools*, 1905, practically a proclamation that (to quote a phrase of Pestalozzi) the educational wagon is to be turned round and driven on a new track, forms probably the best brief handbook on pedagogical method for young children extant. The new Regulations for Training Colleges, coming into force in August, 1907, have spread consternation among the sectarian institutions, by decreeing "that in no circumstances may the application of a candidate be rejected on the ground of religious faith." This is not a *step* forward; it is a *leap*, whether into the dark or into the light. The Office of Special Enquiries and Reports is continuing the valuable series of Special Reports formerly edited by Professor M. E. Sadler. Recent additions consist of Vol. XV, *The Teaching of Domestic Science in the United States*, by Miss A. Ravenhill; Vol. XVI, *Domestic Science in Belgium, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Switzerland, and France*; Vol. XVII, *Schools Public and Private in the North of Europe*. This office is also issuing now a series of brief Educational Pamphlets, in the first numbers of which an important aspect of secondary education, "The Modern Side

² Publishers, Wyman & Co., Fetter Lane, London, W. C. Books issued by the Board of Education can be obtained unbound at a low price.

of Public Schools," is being discussed. [The modern side at Harrow, at Eton, etc., practically corresponds to the *Realgymnasium* in Germany].

Another direction of school organization engaging the attention of our highest authorities is that of the local supply and local control of educational institutions. Professor M. E. Sadler of Manchester University, Professor Adams of London University, and others, during recent years have been asked to investigate the whole series of the educational institutions, primary, secondary, and higher, of certain borough and county authorities with a view to render the supply in their districts adequate in every grade, and to establish the grades on a well-correlated system. In a report of 1906 the Board of Education stated that "more than fifty reports of varying scope, length, and elaboration, dealing with higher, secondary, and elementary education, and prepared and published since the beginning of 1903, have come within the notice of the Board." Of these reports, eight are the work of Professor M. E. Sadler, and two of Professor J. Adams, names that are a guarantee of the broad standpoint from which the investigations and plans for future extension are being treated.

Together with reports, etc., on the present state of education in England issued by educational authorities, we may class two books of independent origin. Graham Balfour's *Educational Systems of Great Britain and Ireland* (1903) is a standard work, replete with carefully prepared statistics; and next in order may be mentioned a collection of essays by various educationists on *Education in the Nineteenth Century*,³ which contains a paper by Professor Sadler on "National Educational and Social Ideals," a philosophical contribution which in thought and language sets forth an inspiring vista of educational possibilities.

Turning now to the books resulting from efforts to improve the bodily health of the people, we find many new school textbooks on hygiene and physiology, textbooks frequently written by physicians. These include Readers for class use, to be made

³ Published by the Cambridge University Press.

use of by pupils from seven years of age up. Physicians as yet know little about the mental development of children, hence these books of "lessons" on cleanliness, temperance, food, etc., contain matter frequently quite unsuitable for the age contemplated.

Of more real worth for teachers is the *Health of the School Child*,⁴ a small volume by Dr. Leslie Mackenzie, chief medical instructor of Edinburgh. It is written primarily for medical inspectors of schools, and contains chapters on such subjects as "The Normal Growth of Children and School Doctors in Germany." Dr. Mackenzie regards regular medical inspection of all children in the public schools as a necessity. To these we may add *The Children of the Nation: How Their Health and Vigour Should Be Promoted by the State*, largely a plea for the school feeding of children, by Sir J. E. Gorst, late parliamentary secretary to the Board of Education, and *School Buildings*⁵ by Felix Clay, an admirably full and careful description of schools of all types—technical, secondary, etc.—illustrated by numerous pictures and plans.

Passing to our third group, books bearing directly on curricula and methods, we find that of late production has surged highest around "the religious question;" shall religious faith and doctrine be taught, or only the Bible, and that in the form of a collection of books which are of the highest religious, historical, and literary importance. A preponderating opinion in favor of the latter proposition is spreading, not only among the laity, but also among the clergy, especially among those known as High Church or Anglican. The clergy and ministers who hold this view turn to the family and to the Sunday school for support in the teaching of doctrine, and hence an organized movement is spreading for reform in Sunday-school methods. Here again few of the books will win more than a temporary vogue. The soundest, as far as my observation extends, are: *Reform in Sunday-School Teaching*,⁶ a criticism of the International Sunday-

⁴ Published by Methner & Co.

⁵ Published by Batsford & Co.

⁶ Clarke & Co.

School Lessons, with suggestions for amended courses, by Professor A. S. Peake of Manchester University; and *Religious Education*,⁷ an attempt to treat Sunday-school instruction from the point of view of modern psychology and ethics, by A. E. Garvie.

Cognate with the efforts of orthodox churchmen to reform the teaching of religious doctrine in the secondary school are those of the Moral Reform League, to organize definite teaching of morality both in day and Sunday schools. The leaders of the Moral Reform League are inclined like the physicians to rely too much on courses of detached lessons, hence they are bringing out a series of lesson-books, consisting for the most part of brief stories intended to inculcate certain definite moral conceptions. The editor of this series is Mr. F. J. Gould.⁸

A book bearing on the historical aspect of religion, of importance to the student, is Miss G. Dodges's *Primitive Christian Education*.⁹ It is a product of considerable research, undertaken to prove that the early Christian church did not discourage secular learning.

Books emanating from the schools, from teachers and professors who are seeking to establish methods and organize instruction on scientific lines, are numerous. As a rule reforms take root first in the newer institutions, and hence we must look for reformers in "modern sides" of public schools, in the new universities, or new departments of the old universities, and in technical schools.

The teaching of modern languages by "natural" or "oral" methods is becoming everywhere popular, especially during the earlier stages. This movement owes much to Dr. Karl Breuil of Cambridge, author of *The Teaching of Modern Foreign Language*,¹⁰ a book which contains a good bibliography of the

⁷ Sunday School Union, 1904.

⁸ *The Children's Book of Moral Lessons*, by F. J. Gould; Watts & Co., 17 Johnson's Court, Flat St., London, W. C.

⁹ Published by Clark & Co.

¹⁰ The Cambridge University Press, 1906.

subject, to Professor Walter Rippmann,¹¹ and Professor Victor Spiers.¹²

In reformed methods of geography teaching Dr. H. J. Mackinder, director of the London School of Economic and Political Science, and Professor A. J. Herbertson, reader in Geography to the University of Oxford, are the chief leaders. The former is now bringing out four volumes of schoolbooks called *Elementary Studies in Geography*;¹³ the latter is joint author with his wife of textbooks, and also of a series of "Descriptive Geographies,"¹⁴ books composed mainly of selections from original sources.

In regard to mathematics the new technical and science schools are naturally impatient of studies of a purely abstract type. They want only such studies as are directly applicable for real ends, and such methods as bring results surely and rapidly. Hence teachers like Professor Henry Armstrong and Professor John Perry¹⁵ have persistently advocated before the Educational Science Section of the British Association and before teachers' conferences for the advancement of science that in geometry the methods of Euclid be abandoned, and that the teaching of mathematics during the elementary stages be approximated to the teaching of elementary science, especially to the teaching of physics. Professor Armstrong's volume on *The Teaching of Scientific Method*¹⁶ is a collection of twenty-four addresses and papers which "cover a period of about twenty years;" they are very unequal in merit. School textbooks professing to expound arithmetic or geometry on new experimental and inductive principles are numerous, but while adhering more closely to scientific method, they do not as a rule approach the mental attitude of young children. It is interesting to note

¹¹ Various textbooks for teaching French and German; published by Dent & Co.

¹² Various textbooks for teaching French; published by Whittaker & Co.

¹³ Published by Nelson & Sons.

¹⁴ Publishers, Adam & Charles Black.

¹⁵ *Discussion on the Teaching of Mathematics*, edited by John Perry; Macmillan & Co., 1900.

¹⁶ Published by Macmillan & Co.

that the more intelligent of these practical teachers are attacking the arithmetic required in technical classes by methods advocated in McClennan and Dewey's *Psychology of Number*, a book which apparently they have never seen. They tell us that the arithmetic usually taught in schools is almost valueless in the physics class, and hence their textbooks on elementary physics are largely filled with new exercises in Arithmetic.¹⁷

We should also note some collections of songs, which although not primarily intended for school purposes are destined to exert, I think, a greater and more beneficial influence on the development of both heart and aim than new ways of teaching languages or arithmetic. I refer to the introduction into the schools of ancient folk-songs. For a decade or more Mr. Cecil Sharpe, Professor Hadow, and others have gone far afield to the old folk in country villages and back lanes and have taken down from their lips songs which they received from generations before them; gradually a store has thus been won of priceless value, and young people learn and sing them with the simple pleasure in the musical rhythms and ringing choruses that their forefathers experienced. The melodies are retained in their ancient form; the words usually need modification. Our musical directors recommend that they should be sung in unison.¹⁸

When we turn to seek for books expounding the principles of mental development and the general theory of education we are obliged to confess to great poverty. I do not find a thoroughly strong book of purely English origin dated later than Professor John McCunn's *Making of Character*,¹⁹ 1900. This is concise, comprehensive, and alive to the bearing of the laws of heredity and evolution on the growth of character. Two recent volumes which are having some vogue, set out with an exposition of modern psychological principles, but fail

¹⁷ See Earl's *Physical Measurement*, a textbook in elementary physics; published by Macmillan & Co.

¹⁸ *English Folk-Songs for Schools*; collection edited by Cecil J. Sharpe, and Professor W. H. Hadow; publishers, Curwen & Sons.

¹⁹ Cambridge Press.

to apply them consistently to class teaching, the methods recommended being frequently of the old mechanical, prescriptive kind; these are *Method in the Infant School*²⁰ by Dr. Gunn, and *Principles of Education*²¹ by Professor Welton of Leeds University.

Two small volumes that show the direction to which our infant school wagon is being turned are *Child Life in Our Schools*²² by Miss M. E. Brown and *School Gardening for Little Children*²³ by Miss L. R. Latter. Both come from head-mistresses of large infants' schools, and describe courses of work and experiments in teaching in large classes of young children inspired by the new spirit in education. Miss Latter's book will prove of much service to teachers who make gardening a central subject.

Of books that focus attention on the child or on psychological principles rather than on classroom method, Miss M. Macmillan's monographs, *Early Childhood*²⁴ and *Imagination in Education*²⁵ are exerting the widest influence. Gifted with keen insight and intense sympathy, Miss Macmillan is arousing and quickening many teachers and parents who have fallen into dead routine.

As already mentioned, the controversy about the doctrines of Herbart is another breeze stirring stagnant waters. The teacher who lately said to me when visiting her so-called kindergarten class, "we are not Froebelians, we are Herbartians here," had at least found some ground upon which to build a scholastic faith. The most ardent devotee, not to say fanatic, of Herbartianism is Mr. F. H. Hayward, author of *The Secret of Herbart*,²⁶ *The Critics of Herbartianism*,²⁶ and *The Meaning of Education as Interpreted by Herbart*.²⁶ Mr. Hayward is doing a good work. In England hitherto it is for the most part only the shell and rind of Herbart's doctrine, the law of correlation and the formal steps that have been studied; Mr. Hayward

²⁰ Nelson & Son, 1904.

²¹ Clive & Co., 1907.

²² George Philip & Son, 1906.

²³ Swan, Sonnenschein & Co., 1906.

²⁴ Swan, Sonnenschein & Co.

²⁵ Swan, Sonnenschein & Co.

²⁶ Ralph Holland & Co.

places first emphasis on the spirit and aim of his theory, his endeavor to organize the whole of instruction for moral ends. Unfortunately the real value of his exposition is obscured by his persistent polemical attitude; he writes as if he were always spoiling for a fight. His chief adversary has been Professor A. Darroch²⁷ of Edinburgh University. Professor Darroch upholds the theory of self-activity and self-realization as inconsistent with the "instruction" and externally stimulated activity advocated by Herbart and his disciple Hayward.

Happily a mediator has appeared. I say *happily* because our limited group of thinkers about educational principles were being rapidly enrolled, *nolens volens*, into two camps: viz., Froebelians, or self-activity, and Herbartians, or "education by instruction," advocates. The reconciler is Dr. John Davidson, a Scotch schoolmaster, whose recent volume, *A New Interpretation of Herbart's Psychology and Educational Theory through the Philosophy of Leibnitz*,²⁸ will prove of interest and value to a wider circle than those concerned with its particular problem. Dr. Davidson takes, so it appears to me, a thoroughly philosophical view of the situation. "Herbartian interest," he writes, "is as much a self-realization as anything can be; the question is which term is the better working concept." And again: "Instead of being at variance with, or contradictory of, the category of self-activity, they (Herbart's concepts) indicate the only way in which the self can find its highest and best realization."

Of these three writers Mr. Davidson is distinctly the more thoughtful, lucid, and scholarly. His views of the psychological foundations of mental discipline and development appear to be in harmony with those of the most recent "school" of philosophical writers, the school known as "Pragmatists" or "Humanists," connected in England with the name of Professor Schiller²⁹

²⁷ *Herbart and the Herbartian Theory of Education; The Children, Some Educational Problems*; Longmans & Co.

²⁸ Blackwood.

²⁹ Author of *Axioms and Postulates; The Riddles of the Sphinx*; and *Humanism*.

of Oxford, and in America with that of Dr. John Dewey and of Professor William James. "If interest," writes Professor Schiller, "is to be tabooed, the whole theory of thought becomes a mere mass of useless machinery; for it sustains and guides the movement of our thought. It effects the necessary selection among the objects of our attention, accepting what is consonant and rejecting what is discrepant with our aim in thinking." And again: "The stream of Truth which waters the fertile field of conduct has its sources in the remote and lonely upland *inter apices philosophiae*. . . . Here lie our water-sheds; thither lead the passes to the realms unknown; hence past our ways, and here it is that we must draw the frontier lines of right and wrong."³⁰

Both Froebel and Herbart climbed these philosophical heights, and both obtained visions of the same truths, but from different sides. Dr. Davidson has sought to ascend the heights and get both visions, and has then endeavored to distinguish above them the water parting, which, while apparently separating them, is in reality their source. He is, we may confidently hope, a precursor of many great thinkers, who, having both strength and leisure to climb to the "lonely uplands," will afterward descend to the lowland plains where teachers harrassed by daily practical difficulties, become blinded by dust sometimes of their own raising, and lose the power to see clearly beyond the radius of their daily tasks.

With you in America the practice has grown common for the greatest psychologists and philosophical thinkers—Dr. John Dewey, Professor W. James, and others—to quit the heights now and again for the mental confusion of teachers' conferences, and there to enlighten and guide the thinking of the common-school assistant. For various reasons this has not yet become a practice in England, but the writings of Dr. Schiller and of others among the younger philosophers are so closely related intellectually and sympathetically with the new spirit in education that it will not be long, we may hope, before the two ranges

³⁰ F. C. S. Schiller, *Humanism*, p. 36; Macmillan (1903).

of thought, philosophy and education, will make definite contact. Then when the bold and experienced Alpine climbers give their support to teachers seeking a path upward from the schoolroom, we shall win a firmer foothold, and find more solid foundations for the great system of public instruction which is now in the process of organization.